

**Enlightenment:  
What It Is**  
**SADHGURU**

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## **Sadhguru**

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# Introduction

What does it really mean to know yourself? How does it feel to have no more questions about life – its meaning, its purpose, its glaring inequalities? What does it mean to reach, not just a roadblock, not a fuelling station, not a cul-de-sac, but the actual end of the journey? What does it mean – really mean – to be enlightened?

In an intimate encounter with Sadhguru, one of the most profound mystics of our time, a group of listeners shared not just their curiosity, but their confusions. It was a unique opportunity to sit face-to-face with a realised being, and the questions flowed thick and fast. In his inimitable style, precise and humorous, logical and compassionate, Sadhguru responded to some age-old questions about what it means to live in the realm of the mystic – and why some get there and some don't.

Death, by contrast, remains a more democratic destination. Unlike enlightenment, which seems often unfairly (as one questioner put it) to be the preserve of a lucky few, death is the proverbial leveller – unambiguous and inexorable, not to mention invariably inconvenient, if not downright terrifying. Even those who claim to be unafraid would concede that they cannot be indifferent to the fact that they have no clue of what happens when the curtains drop. And drop they always do.

**Arundhathi Subramaniam**

# Enlightenment: What It Is

*‘The most difficult thing about enlightenment is that it is too simple.’*

**Questioner:** My basic question is what does enlightenment feel like?

**Sadhguru:** What does it feel like? Let's say you have never had the experience of drinking water and I have, if I try to describe to you how it feels to drink water, it doesn't matter how articulate I am, will I ever get it across to you?

**Questioner:** Try.

**Sadhguru:** Could *you*? Could you describe to a man who has never had the experience of drinking water, what it really feels like to drink water? Something as simple as that won't get across, isn't it? If people talk about anything which is not in your experience, it doesn't matter how articulate they are, invariably it only leads to misunderstanding. So let's not talk about how it feels. Let's talk about what it means technically. If I say how it feels, I will end up saying things which you can't take. Because when we use language, I have to take care that I am logical.

What you are referring to as ‘enlightenment’ is not a logical process. It is well beyond that. If I speak illogically with you for the next five minutes, you will want to leave. You will sit here only if I speak logically. That means you have made it very clear to me: ‘don't talk enlightenment.’ We will talk around it, but not it.

So what is it that we are referring to as ‘enlightenment’? There are various levels of experience that human beings are going through. Some people know just food and sleep; some people know how to create something; some people know action; some people know art; some people know music; some people know drugs, sex, so many things. But if you look at it carefully, whether a human being is out to

make money, have pleasure, or go to heaven, he is always seeking to have a larger slice of life. Whether he wants to go to the temple or to the bar, he is still trying to have a larger slice of life. That is the only intention - to enhance the present level of life to something more.

You have had pieces of life - some of them have been good, maybe some of them bitter, but you have had a certain slice of life. Suppose you had the whole pie for yourself, I would call that enlightenment. You are not seeking pieces anymore. You have become very greedy; you want all of it. Everything that can be known experientially, you want to know right now. If you do manage it, that's called enlightenment. Is it very difficult? Not at all.

The most difficult thing about enlightenment is that it is too simple and it is most obvious. Because it is so obvious, the whole world misses it. If it was somewhere up on the moon, by now everybody would have gotten it. But the problem is it is right here within you but your whole focus is out. Right now your whole perception of life is only through the five senses. Everything that you know right now has entered you by either seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting or touching. This is the only way you know the world, isn't it?

If you shut down these five sense agencies, you will have no experience of life or of yourself. This is what is happening to you when you fall asleep. When you fall asleep, you are very much alive - the body is alive, the mind is on, the world is on - but all of them have disappeared in your experience simply because the five senses have just shut down, that's all. Sense organs are the only means of experience for you right now. Sense organs, in the very nature of things, are outward-bound. Even if you drop a pin, you can hear it. But so much activity is going on in this body, can you hear it? No. If an ant crawls upon your skin you can feel it. But there is so much blood flowing inside, can you feel it? No. Sense organs are essentially outward-bound. Because of your dependence upon the sense perception, turning inward and knowing the inner dimension seems to be so out of reach. That's only because you do not have the right kind of instrument or the right kind of vehicle to turn inward. It is like you

want to eat a chocolate, but you want to eat it through your ears. Quite impossible, isn't it? You just have to understand, it can only go into the mouth, not in the ear. Enlightenment is *that* difficult.

**Questioner:** It never seems that easy.

**Sadhguru:** I am saying it is that difficult. Even if you use both ears, still the chocolate won't go down. Even a piece of it won't go. You just have to use the right inlet. It looks impossible because people do not make the necessary effort to find which way. They want to go the way they know. It is like you are riding a bullock cart, but you want to go to the moon. Somebody gives you a horsewhip and tells you, 'Really whip the bulls, you will get there.' You won't get there.

The reason why it has become so difficult is because too much nonsense has been spoken about it. If nobody had said anything about it, many people would have found their way. Too much nonsense has been said and a whole lot of confusion has been created. People have read and written too many things without knowing what it is. People have said too many things without having a clue what they are talking about, which has left so many absolutely confused. At least if people shut up, human intelligence is capable of knowing this. But that is if a human being grows up with an uncluttered intelligence. When I say 'uncluttered' - if your intelligence functions without being identified with anything in particular, then knowing the inner dimension becomes a natural process. Right now that possibility has been taken away because right from day one, parents are working hard to get children identified with their family and their stupid values and whatever. The teachers are working super-hard.

On a certain day, a bull strayed into the forest. He saw lush green grass and he went grazing, deeper and deeper into the forest. After a few weeks of living there, he grew fat - all food and no work. Then, an old lion, who was well beyond his prime and was having difficulty hunting wild animals, saw this fat bull. Easier to stalk and kill a bull than a deer, you know? So he looked for his time and pounced on the bull, killed him, and ate him up. His stomach became real full. He

roared with great satisfaction. A few hunters passing that way heard the roar, tracked down the lion and shot him dead. The moral of the story is: when you are so full of bull, you should not open your mouth!

But all the time these people are opening their mouths. If they all shut up for some time, it will be very natural for every human being to long to know. Right now they are just destroying that by giving readymade solutions and all kinds of nonsense to believe in. It is very natural for your intelligence to probe at everything, isn't it? And how can you ignore yourself? You have ignored yourself because they have always made you look up there, at some god that they themselves have not seen. Because of this, enlightenment has been transported or exported to heaven. Otherwise it is simple; it is the most obvious.

When [Krishna](#) went on talking 'truth,' Arjuna said, 'Where the hell is this truth that you are talking about? Because when I ask you, 'is it here?' you say 'no'. If I ask you, 'is it there?' you say 'no'. Another time if I ask you, 'is it here?' you say 'yes'. If I ask you, 'is it there?' you say 'yes'. What is this nonsense? Tell me where it is, I will go get it.' He is a warrior, you know? So Krishna laughed and said, 'The ultimate truth about life is at the tip of your nose.'

There are many schools of yoga who are intensely focusing on the tips of their noses. Try focusing on the tip of your nose. You will get a headache in two minutes. You will not get enlightened. All he is saying is, it is the most obvious. The problem is it is here, within, but your senses are set outside. You just need a little bit of turning around, that's all.

***'Many are called, but few choose.'***

**Questioner:** There is this line that I often go back to in the Bible, about many being called, but few chosen. It seems very unfair. Spirituality seems like a very undemocratic process.

**Sadhguru:** I would say many are called, but few choose. Few choose to really come. It is not that a few are chosen. Just a few

choose to take the step. People ask me how many steps? I tell them to take one step. And there is only one step. You have taken a million steps outward. But just one step inward is all it takes. To take a step inward, you have to turn around and take it. But you are not willing to turn around because you have made investments on the outside. It is not that if you turn inward, you lose the outside. It is not so. It is an uncalled-for fear and once again this fear has been nourished by all kinds of misinterpretations of spirituality.

People have always told you, 'if you turn spiritual, you will leave everything and go away. If you turn spiritual, your residence has to be in a Himalayan cave along with the rodents. It cannot be in [Mumbai](#).' An inward step has nothing to do with Himalayas or with Mumbai. Mumbai or Himalayas is a choice of residence, that's all. That's an outward thing. It has nothing to do with your spirituality at all. You would like to live in the mountains, fine. It is up to you. It has its advantages and disadvantages. If you like to live in Mumbai, it has its advantages and disadvantages.

***'When you are constantly in pursuit of security, you are in pursuit of death.'***

**Questioner:** But I don't find my inside a very nice place.

**Sadhguru:** You have never seen your inside. What you are right now calling your 'inside' is your mind. Your mind is not inside. Your mind is just society's garbage bin. Everything in your mind you picked up from outside. Everything that is in your mind is just what you have been exposed to. So your mind is not inside, it is outside.

**Questioner:** We do some processing of that garbage. I choose to come and listen to you. I could have chosen to do otherwise, but I didn't. So we do make choices about what we'd like to process.

**Sadhguru:** Yes. See, you have no choice about what you take in. You have a choice about what you make use of and what you don't. But even that choice is not really a choice, because that choice is also



set up by something else that has gone in earlier. So you really have no great choice about it. Everything - the content of your head and the content of your body - both were collected from outside. You slowly accumulated this body. How? Just by eating food, isn't it? The content of your mind also you accumulated, just by your exposure and the impressions of what enters you through the five agencies.

These five agencies that you are using to collect the impressions of life around you are not reliable at all. One thing is, people have always told you that seeing is believing. Seeing is not believing. You know very well, everybody sees what they want to see. Everybody does not see what is there. Going more fundamentally into the very process of vision itself, even that is not reliable.

The sense organs were open only to serve survival. They are sufficient instruments of survival but not if you are seeking something beyond survival. You are talking enlightenment, which is not a survival process. Once you are looking at something beyond survival, sense organs are no good. You have to have another dimension of perception.

So the whole process of spirituality is just about enhancing your perception. Unfortunately if I use the word 'spirituality,' people think they will have to chant or go sit in the temple, church or mosque, or that they have to give up their food and clothing. Spirituality is not about that. It's about enhancing your perception.

The only way to know is by enhancing your perception. Everything else is just belief. What you believe is immaterial because if someone works hard enough on you, they can make you believe any damn thing - even the weirdest of things in the world - if they work upon you right from your childhood. Haven't you seen enough of life around? You know that.

So what you believe, whatever it may be, is of no existential value. It may have social value but when you talk about enlightenment, you are not talking about social or personal dimensions of life. You are talking about an existential dimension of life. If you

have to be open, if you have to know life in an existential way, the only way is to enhance your perception - not by thinking it up, not by philosophizing, not by discussion, not by believing. You can receive and know life only with enhanced perception. There is no other way to know life. So enlightenment means a heightened level of perception in an ultimate way. If your perception is full on, you receive everything that can be received and know life in its totality. We would call that enlightenment.

Now that you asked, 'How does it feel,' let me try to work around that. Technically, I will say enlightenment would be like this: if you sit here, your body is *here*, your mind is out *there*, but what is 'you' is always away from these two things. You can use the body, you can use the mind, but what is 'you' is always a little away from these two things. If you look at life's experience, the biggest limitation upon you right now is your body and your mind. But the only two possibilities in your life to exist here are also through your body and mind. The source of all suffering that any human being may know is his body and mind. If you have a little distance from this body and mind, you have a clear experience that you are free from suffering. Once there is no fear of suffering, what would your experience of living here be?

Right now, every step that you take is half a step because there is a fear of 'what will happen to me.' If you carefully observe your life, I would say for a majority of the population, at least ninety percent of their life is dedicated to their security. The steps that they take in their life are not being taken in search of joy or love or freedom or anything. It is always in search of security. Isn't it so? When you are constantly in pursuit of security, you are in pursuit of death, because life is never secure. It doesn't matter what you do, how much insurance you have, what your bank balance is, how many thousands of people you have around you, tomorrow morning you may just fall dead. We are not wishing it, but it can happen, isn't it? It's happening to so many people. It can happen to you or me tomorrow morning.

As long as your life and the experience of life is limited only to the physical and the mental, living with fear and being constantly

security-oriented is unavoidable. It is inevitable, that's the only way you can live. If your experience of life transcends the limitations of the physical, now the physical and mental is still there in your life, but you are never a part of it. You can use it, you can enjoy it, but you never become that. If this freedom is attained, can you imagine how you will live? Unbridled life, isn't it? You can play with life any way you want, but life cannot leave a single scratch upon you. Is that a good description of enlightenment? Is it worthwhile?

***‘If you are a vested interest, you shouldn’t talk about enlightenment.’***

**Questioner:** It sounds frightening.

**Sadhguru:** Frightening? Why?

**Questioner:** When you are enlightened, do you begin to see that everything is like [maya](#) or illusion, and does everything fade and seem unimportant? And if someone you love gets enlightened, would they also see you like a puff of vapor?

**Sadhguru:** You should ask people around me, whether I love them or whether my involvement with them is more or less than anything that they have known in their life with anybody. For thousands of people, I am very deeply, passionately involved. If you are free from suffering, if you are free from the fear of suffering, would you hesitate to involve yourself in life or would you throw yourself into life? Right now you are hesitating. Right now most of you are made like this: if somebody suddenly smiles at you on the street, you hesitate. ‘Why is this man smiling at me?’ Because you are afraid of what would be the consequence of that. Fundamentally you are afraid: ‘Tomorrow it may hurt me, tomorrow something else may happen to me out of this.’ You are constantly hesitating to involve yourself with life simply because of the fear of suffering. If the fear of suffering is taken away, you would give yourself absolutely to everything around you. This way, would you love more or love less?

**Questioner:** Love more, I imagine, logically, from what you have said. Yes...

**Sadhguru:** See, I can only speak logically to you. Do you want me to speak another language which is not logical?

**Questioner:** I have no problems with fuzzy...

**Sadhguru:** But that's still logic - fuzzy logic.

**Questioner:** If the truth is illogical, I don't mind illogical. But is it illogical?

**Sadhguru:** To carry on any kind of logic, you need two; you need you and me to have a logical speech. When you say 'enlightenment,' you are talking about one. Modern science is a logical development, but today physics has reached a point where it is no longer logical. Because scientists have made too much investment in logic, they are unwilling to admit that they are turning illogical. They are giving the name 'fuzzy logic' to their illogical nonsense. They are afraid to admit that their logical ways have no further scope. That's the reason why these kinds of words have been coined.

If you are fuzzy, how can you be logical? To be logical, you must be like a knife, cutting everything into pieces. If you are fuzzy, how will you be logical? So fuzzy logic itself is illogical. The very terminology is illogical.

Today, science is beginning to realize that the logical way of approaching things is limiting. It cannot take you beyond a certain point. It is a good realization. But they have made so much investment in the logical, they are afraid to turn around and do something else because then all that they have worked on may become meaningless. Like you are saying – it may become 'maya.'

What's your problem in seeing that it is maya? I am not saying that the person next to you is a puff of vapor, okay, but suppose, in truth, that person is just a bubble of air, what is your problem in seeing it that way? The problem is you have made an investment. If you are a

vested interest, you shouldn't talk about enlightenment. If you are a seeker, wanting to know what is true, only then you should talk about it.

If you were to tell me, 'even if this person is just a bubble of air, I would like to think he is made of gold,' then I am fine with you. I am fine with you as a friend, but I won't talk enlightenment to you because you have no intention like that. You have no intention of seeing life just the way it is. Why are we afraid of seeing life the way it is? Do you think the way creation is, is not as good as the way you have imagined it? That's a foolish idea because you are just a piece of creation. So whatever you are imagining about life, the way creation is must be far more beautiful than the way you are imagining it. Because you are just a tiny speck of creation. If you can think up so much, what created you must be much, much more. At least, is it logical to see it that way?

**Questioner:** When I see my mind, I see a fractured, fissured place, with a great capacity for violence. And therefore, extrapolating from that, my inventor could well have been demented, and the whole of creation may not be benevolent, and that frightens me.

**Sadhguru:** Only the fundamentals of life were created by whatever you refer to as the Creator. The rest of it is your creation. If you have a demented mind, that is definitely your creation. You already told me, 'No matter what information gets into me, I still have a choice of processing it the way I want.' So right now, if it has processed itself to a corner where it has become violent, whose creation is that? It is your creation, isn't it? So it has got nothing to do with the Creator as such. Whatever the existence around you right now, whatever you have seen, whatever created this, is it far beyond your intelligence and imagination? Yes? Even a single atom, is it well beyond your perception and understanding and intelligence right now? Such a magnificent creation that you cannot even understand a tiny bit of it properly - could it be wrong? This right and wrong is your idea, isn't it? The only right thing to do is to be in tune with the existence and the creation. Right now, you are not living in the world - you are

not a living being - because ninety-five percent of the time, you are only thinking about life. You are not living life. Unfortunately, you are beginning to believe that whatever you are thinking is life. What you think, is not life. What you think, has nothing to do with life. You can think whatever you wish to, but it has nothing to do with life as such.

***‘Yoga, or inner engineering, is just to align your four wheels in such a way that you travel smoothly.’***

**Questioner:** What yoga practices did you perform to get this kind of ecstatic and blissful experience?

**Sadhguru:** They were very simple and physical; nothing spiritual about them. But what you need to understand is, if something larger has to happen, it's very important that you are in complete alignment. Right now what you consider as ‘myself’ is just these four elements: your physical body, your mind, your emotions and the life energy which makes these things happen. These are the four components which you call ‘myself.’ If you want something bigger to happen, you must put these four things in proper alignment. All yoga is structured and designed to put these four dimensions in absolute alignment.

These four dimensions of mind, emotions, body and energy means head, heart, hands and energy. Is there anybody here who is only head, not heart, not hands, not energy? You are a combination of these four things, isn't it? So you need these four basic yogas. There are only four yogas. They are known as *gnana yoga*, *bhakti yoga*, *karma yoga* and *kriya yoga*. If you employ your intelligence to reach your ultimate nature, it is called *gnana yoga*. If you employ your emotions to reach your ultimate nature, we call it *bhakti yoga*. If you employ your body to reach your ultimate nature, or action, we call it *karma yoga*. If you transform your inner energies and reach your ultimate nature, it is called *kriya yoga*. These are the only four ways. But which one shall I take? There is no such choice, because you are a combination of all these four. You have to employ them in the right proportion. In one person, the head may be dominant. In another

person, the heart may be dominant. In somebody else, the body may be dominant. Accordingly, a right mixture has to be made. Otherwise it won't happen.

There is a very beautiful story in the yogic lore. On a certain day, a gnana yogi, a bhakti yogi, a kriya yogi, and a karma yogi were walking in the forest. Usually, these four people can never be together because they cannot stand each other. A gnana yogi, who is employing his intelligence, has great disdain for everybody. He thinks everybody is an utter fool, especially these bhakti people who are looking up and saying, '[Rama](#), Rama.' He cannot stand them at all. Bhakti people have sympathy for everyone - 'when God is here, instead of just holding his hand and walking, all this hair-splitting nonsense and this yoga is just utter nonsense. Just call for God's help and it will happen.' A karma yogi thinks all these idiots are just lazy. To cover up their laziness, they have invented all these stupid yogas. A kriya yogi has absolute disdain for everybody because after all, the whole of life is energy. If you don't transform the energy, where is the way?

So these four people can never get along together, but one day they were walking together. Suddenly a rainstorm broke loose. They started running, looking for shelter. Because the bhakti yogi knows the geography of temples, he said, 'In this direction in the forest there is an ancient temple. Let's go there and get some shelter.' They all ran there.

The temple was in a dilapidated condition - just the roof and four columns were there. The walls were all long gone. The storm became more and more severe and started lashing from every direction, so they got closer and closer. In the center of the temple, there was a linga, or the symbol of Shiva. They had no other place to sit to escape the storm, so they just hugged the linga and sat - all four of them - not out of any love for God or anything, but just to escape the storm.

Suddenly God appeared. In all their four minds, the immediate question was 'Why now? So much yoga we did, so much [sadhana](#) we did, you did not come. But now, when we were just trying to escape

the storm, here you are. Why?’ So God said, ‘At last you four idiots got together. I have been waiting for this moment for a long time.’

This is the biggest problem. If these four dimensions are not in alignment, nothing big can happen. When you are trying to drive your car, if one wheel points this way and one wheel points that way, you know what a torture it will be? That is the torture that you see in people right now. Their mind is this way, their heart is that way, their body is somewhere else, their energy is somewhere else. How do you expect them to travel smoothly to any destination for that matter?

Yoga, or what we are referring to as ‘inner engineering,’ is just to align these four wheels in such a way that you travel smoothly. Right now even if you are in the direction of hell, it doesn’t matter. Once your car is going well, you can just make a U-turn in no time. But if you have this torture of a vehicle where the four wheels are pointing in four different directions, which way will you go? You cannot go anywhere. You will just get sucked in and pushed around by situations. Your direction is not decided by you. Your direction is decided by the situations in which you live. That is the life of a slave, isn't it?

***‘If you are suffering your bondage that is fine, but you are suffering your freedom.’***

**Questioner:** Why is there so much talk of human enlightenment, and why has the human being been given so much of choice to be selfish and not to be useful like everything else is in the universe?

**Sadhguru:** Even the earthworm is not thinking of being useful. Earthworm is also greedy for his survival. He wants to eat and reproduce as much as he can. With what little he knows, he is very selfish. But we are taking advantage of his selfishness in some way, for our selfishness.

All creatures are structured in such a way that they are not thinking of serving anybody. Don’t think the tree outside is thinking of



giving flowers to you. It is just trying to attract the bees and the birds and reproduce. It is not trying to give flowers to you to wear them in your hair, or smell them and feel wonderful about it. It is not at all concerned about you, it is striving for its survival and reproduction. You are giving it all kinds of meanings in your head, but all life, every creature - a plant, an animal, insect, worm - is only striving for its survival. But creation is such that the whole process is a chain - you know the food chain, and all that stuff.

Why human life needs so much attention is because we are human beings. Earthworms may be having a meeting right now talking about their enlightenment. But their methods won't work for you. Because we are a human society, we are sitting here and talking about human enlightenment. So it is not just that we are paying so much attention to our lives. They are also paying enormous attention to their lives. They are not ignoring their lives. But the distinction is that animal life is still compulsive.

In yoga, we look at life as happening in three different dimensions. This is called *mruga*, *manushya*, and *deva* - that means animal nature, human nature and divine nature. Animal nature is well established. Divine nature is very well established. What you call 'human' is not established. This moment you can be godlike, the next moment you can be like a brute. You are swinging between the two. Sometimes you are near this, sometimes you are near that. Look at yourself and see, in twenty-four hours' time, how many swings you make. This moment you are wonderful, the next moment you are nasty, the next moment you are beautiful, the next moment you are ugly. Isn't this happening to you? You are constantly swinging. There is no such thing that you can point out and say, 'this is human nature.' Humanity is a flux. You can become anything you want. No other animal has this freedom.

This life, which was in that compartmentalized animal nature, has now evolved to a status where it is no longer restricted. It can become anything it wants. This is freedom. But this is what human beings are suffering right now. What people are suffering is not their bondage.

What people are suffering is their freedom. That's why it is so tragic.

If your life was fixed like animal nature, you wouldn't be suffering so much, isn't it? For example, let's say a tiger is born. He is not sitting there planning and calculating how to become a good tiger. If he just finds enough food, he will become a good tiger. He has no such fears and insecurities: 'Will I become a tiger or will I end up as a house cat?' These kinds of problems don't exist for him.

You are born as a human being. Just see, how *many* things you have to do to become a good human being. And after all this, you still don't know where you belong. Compared to another human being you can say, 'Okay, I am better than him.' But by yourself, you do not know where you belong. Because what you call a 'human being' is not established. You are left free by nature. This is a tremendous possibility.

Nature left you free like this, trusting your intelligence, trusting that naturally you will seek the higher, not the lower. Because there is something within you which is always trying to seek the highest that you know. If you know money, you want to be the richest man in the world. If you know power, you want to be the most powerful man in the world. If you are an artistic person, you want to be the most artistic person in the world. Whatever you know as life, it is very natural for you to seek the highest in that, isn't it? This is a natural urge. This urge has been put into you, and you have been left free to become whatever you want, with the trust that you will anyway go for the highest. But right now, human beings are going about as if they want to disprove that.

So the talk about human enlightenment has risen only because of this unstructuring of life for you. If it was very structured, as it is for every other creature, we wouldn't be talking to you about enlightenment. We would be talking to you only about survival. But now that your life has been slightly unstructured, you can make yourself into anything that you wish. This moment if you are willing, you can make yourself very joyful and pleasant. This moment if you

want, you can make yourself very unpleasant or something else. The choice is always there every moment. Most of the time, you are not exercising this choice because you are existing in a compulsive way, as a reaction to many things around you.

The whole effort - what we call a spiritual process or a path - is to transform this compulsive being into a conscious being. To make every aspect of life, from A to Z - from the process of living and dying to choosing the very womb that you are born in - into a conscious process. That is what the spiritual path means.



# Leave Death Alone

*‘Death is a fiction.’*

**Questioner:** We keep hearing that one should get out of this cycle of birth and death. Can you throw some light on this?

**Sadhguru:** So, putting an end to the cycle of birth and death. I always insist that you don't believe anything that is not yet in your experience. It doesn't matter who says it. This does not mean that you should disbelieve it. No. You don't know, that's all. Somebody tells you a story, you don't know whether it's true or not true. So, even if I say something, don't believe this nonsense. But don't disbelieve it either. Just see: 'Somebody is willing to sit in front of this many people and talk absolute nonsense, something that is totally absurd, so let me see what this is about.' If you keep that much openness, the possibility is alive in your life. If you believe it, you will kill it. If you disbelieve it, you will kill it. You understand?

Death exists only for the ignorant. Have you ever died? No. Did you ever see a dead man? You did? Where?

**Questioner:** At a funeral.

**Sadhguru:** You saw a dead man at a funeral? A dead body, you saw. Did you see a dead man? No. Have you met anybody who died and came back and told you, 'I died like this'? No. There are people who have had near-death experiences. Near is not good enough. 'I nearly ate', is it good enough? No. So just like that, I nearly died is not good enough. So you haven't died, you haven't seen a dead man, nor have you had firsthand information from anybody. Then where the hell did you get this idea from that you will die? Death is a fiction. There are too many people who talked and made you believe. There is no such thing as death. There is only life, life, and life alone - moving from one dimension to another.

When the physical body becomes too feeble, or breaks up for some reason - either you crashed your car, or you drank too much and broke your liver, or you fell out of love and broke your heart, or you just became too old and feeble - when the body becomes unsuitable to sustain life for some reason, life has to move on. So it does.

When you say 'somebody is no more', you are only saying 'they are no more with us'. You are not saying that they are really no more. They're just no more with you, in the way you knew them. When one leaves the body, the fundamental reason is that the physical body has become unsuitable to sustain and nourish life. When this happens, what will happen to that being? The physical body and the conscious mind go. The discriminatory aspect of the mind is gone, but the content of the mind is not gone. One still has those qualities but one has no discrimination.

One thing that you need to understand is, when somebody dies – it doesn't matter if he happens to be your father, your mother, your husband, your wife, your child, or how dear a friend he was - the moment he leaves the body, he has got nothing to do with you. Because everything that he knew about you was physical, isn't it? When I say physical, it is not just of the body, but of the mind and emotion. All that you know about that person and all that that person knows about you is either on the level of the physical body, or the mind, or emotion. All these things belong to the sphere of the physical. So when he leaves the physical, all these things are gone and there is nothing like 'me and my dead father'. Once he is dead, he is not your father.

Once the discriminatory mind is gone, he will only proceed according to his tendencies. This is the reason why in India, so much significance is given to how a person dies, so that we can set up some kind of orientation to the tendencies with which he will flow. It doesn't matter how he lived, but when the last moment comes, the idea is to create some sense of awareness that he doesn't die in fear, greed, or something like that because that final moment of transition tends to become his quality in a big way. It becomes one of the major

tendencies of his further progression.

You can try this with your sleep tonight. That final moment when you are transiting from wakefulness to sleep, see if you can simply be aware. You will see, if you try to be aware, you will be awake; only when you lose your awareness you will fall asleep. But if you can manage awareness, something tremendous will happen. If that is not possible, at least try to bring some quality to the last few moments of your falling asleep. Let's say you make it very loving or very happy within yourself. If you can bring some quality to the last moment of transition from wakefulness to sleep, that quality will continue through sleep, always. That's exactly what will happen with death also. If at the final moment a certain quality is brought in, that quality will continue.

It is because of this understanding that, in India, when people want to die, they don't want to die in their home. They want to go to [Varanasi](#) and die. People still go there. Varanasi used to be a major 'death place'. Lakhs of people used to go there and just wait to die, because for centuries, this has been one place which was concentrated with any number of enlightened beings. Not anymore, but it used to be a center. So people thought if they go there and die, there was always help coming; they could die in the right kind of condition.

***'If the life energies become overly intense, you cannot keep the body.  
If the life energies become feeble, you cannot keep the body.'***

This cycle of birth and death... Suppose the body broke because of some reason, the life energy will still be vibrant. The body breaks either because you shot yourself, or you crashed yourself, or you drank yourself to death, or whatever. If the life energies did not become feeble, but the body broke for some reason, now this being will have a long transition. Because the vibrancy of the energy is still there, and it has to wear itself out. Unless this energy becomes feeble, that being cannot find another body.

There is something called *prarabdha*. Prarabdha is the allotted [karma](#) for one lifetime, because the stock of karma that you have, if all of it comes into one life, you can't live. You have a warehouse. This warehouse is referred to as *sanchita*. You can't handle the whole warehouse of karma, so a retail stock has been given to you to dispense with in this life. But generally, most people gather more new stock rather than get rid of the old stock. In the process of getting rid of the old stock, they gather more stock. So the cycle goes on and on and on.

This cycle could go on and on, not because you are under some punishment or reward. It is just nature finding its own cycle. When a certain awareness arises within you, not because you read something, but because somewhere you began to feel the meaninglessness of the cycle - it's all nice, we are enjoying it, but just going on and on doesn't make sense - when that awareness comes, that is when you will start talking about *mukti*. Mukti means you want to become free from the process of life and death - not because you are suffering. Suffering people cannot attain mukti. You are fine, you are joyful, but you have had enough of the kindergarten and you want to move on. However beautiful your school-life was, don't you want to go to college? That's all. You have seen enough of it. Now you want to move on.

This being – whatever you refer to as ‘me’ right now – is like a bubble. I always use negative terminology so that your imaginations don't fly away. So let's say your ‘emptiness’ or your ‘darkness’, because if I say ‘light’, then you will start shining all over the place. If I say ‘God’, then you will start doing funny things. You can't imagine much about empty darkness, isn't it? You wouldn't like to talk to anybody about darkness, but if I say you are light, immediately you would like to go and tell your neighbor, ‘I am divine light’. So we always use negative terminology so that your imagination doesn't fly off and make you hallucinate.

So this empty space within you is like a bubble. Karma is the wall of the bubble. Without karmic substance you have no existence. Karma is not your enemy. It's only because of karmic substance that

you are glued to the body. If all your karma is removed, you cannot be held in the body. Even when you slip out of the physical body, this bubble is on, and once it loses its vibrancy, it will find another body, naturally.

When you say 'I want mukti', what you are saying is you want to prick the bubble in such a way that this emptiness, which is enclosed within the bubble, bursts. Let's say now we blow bubbles here. Lots of bubbles. But the moment they burst, the air inside the bubble, where did it go? It has become part of everything. Mukti means just that. Enlightenment also means the same thing. If you are not aware of this already, for most beings, their moment of enlightenment and their moment of leaving the body is always the same. Just a few who know the tricks of the body, who know the fundamental mechanics of the body, manage to retain the body for a certain period of time. Otherwise, the moment of enlightenment and the moment of leaving the body are the same.

If the life energies become overly intense, you cannot keep the body. If the life energies become feeble, you cannot keep the body. Only if they're in a certain level of intensity you can hold on to the body. If you raise the intensity beyond a certain pitch, you will leave. If you drop it below a certain pitch you will leave. These are the two types of yoga that you see in the world. One is withdrawing so that you become feeble, so that you can go. Another is revving up to a high pitch so that intensity is so much that the physical cannot hold you anymore. Both ways, if it becomes too intense or too feeble, the physical cannot hold you anymore.

So two types of yoga are being done: one to become feeble; one to become intense. Socially, the intense one may be more appreciated, but what somebody thinks of you has no existential relevance. It has some social relevance, but existentially, what the world thinks about you or above all, what you think about yourself, has no relevance at all. When you say 'spirituality', you are seeing how to progress existentially, not socially, psychologically, or emotionally. You want to progress on the existential level; you want to go somewhere *really*.



Because your emotion, your society, your psychology, is all just pure imagination. You may not like to hear that, but isn't it so? Maybe it is pleasant imagination sometimes, but still imagination, isn't it?

The progression of a being beyond his body is not dependent upon who he was in the world, what he thought of himself, what everybody thought of him. It simply depends on how conscious he is, what he has generated beyond the physical within himself, because you can do conscious action only when you are in the body. Once you leave the body, there is no conscious action because the discriminatory aspect of the intellect is taken away from you. Why human birth is considered so valuable is mainly because of this. Only in this one birth, as a human being, you can use your discrimination and act consciously. It doesn't matter what kind of life you have lived till now, this moment you can still act consciously, isn't it? That freedom and that discretion are always with you.

If this consciousness arises and a certain intensity is picked up, or if the intensity is dropped beyond a certain point, you become unsuitable for living in the body. When that situation arises, there are possibilities for you to break the bubble completely. If you want to break the bubble and still retain the body, then you need engineering. You need to know all the tricks, or you have to do some conscious karma to retain the body. There are any number of things that people do. I don't wish to speak about myself because so many things are happening with me.

For example, Ramakrishna Paramahansa was a fantastic human being, a very crystallized consciousness. During his own lifetime people saw him as godlike. But Ramakrishna was mad about food. He was insane about food. He would be talking to his disciples, and suddenly say, 'Please wait'. He would go to the kitchen and ask Sarada, his wife, 'What's cooking today?' He was just madly taken by food. Sarada felt so ashamed of him: 'Why are you like this? I am not concerned about food. We see you as godlike and you are crazy about food. What is this?' He would say 'That's okay, but what's cooking?'

One particular day she became angry, and angry words flew out of her. Then Ramakrishna said, 'The day you bring me dinner, if I show no interest in the food, you must know there are only three more days left.' Six years later, she took the food to him and he turned away. Suddenly, she remembered and she broke down and cried. He said, 'There is no point crying now. Time is up.' He was using food as a conscious karma to create a conscious desire. Every day, at least ten times a day, he has to think of food to keep the body going; otherwise if he just sits, he will leave the body. He has planned out some work for himself, so he wants to hold on to the body for some more time.

Like this, different yogis create different methods: some are simple, some are very complex - various kinds of processes. Once the bubble is gone, and you are just keeping it consciously there, in many ways, existentially, you are not on account.

***'What is nonphysical will not come into your perception. You have to dissolve into it.'***

**Questioner:** You have described the various kinds of bodies, and then you said there is an energy body and there is a transition body. What is the difference between the two?

**Sadhguru:** Generally, in English, the transition body is referred to as the 'etheric' body. You know, people are talking about ether? Ether is generally assumed to be nonphysical, but it is not totally nonphysical. It is a transition between the physical and nonphysical. What is nonphysical is never in your perception, unless you become that. What is physical can be brought into your perception. If you do the necessary work, it is just a question of time and work to get everything that is physical in the existence into your perception. It cannot be outside your perception. It's possible to do that. But what is nonphysical will not come into your perception. You have to dissolve into it. There is no other way. This is why there is all this talk about surrendering to God. What they are trying to tell you is, that which is beyond the physical cannot be grasped; you have to give in. There is

no other way. It is because of this that we have all the talk and distortion about ‘surrender’, because that which is beyond the physical cannot be grasped by you in any way. You can only merge with it, you can only dissolve into it. The word ‘surrender’ is not the right word, but that’s been commonly in use. So this dimension, which is a transition between physical and nonphysical, can also be grasped to some extent.

Way back, many years ago, I was painting my farm building, and I didn’t have much time because I am painting the whole farm single-handedly. So what I would do was, I would dip the brush in the paint and just walk from one end to another. Then I would dip it again and walk back. So for the first smear, I dipped the brush and just walked. It started out thick and as it went on, it became thinner and thinner, and then disappeared. And that just blew my mind totally, because the whole existence was right there for me.

This is all existence is. Something is gross, and it becomes subtler and subtler, and it becomes non-material. When it becomes non-material, you call it divine. When it is very gross, you call it rock or matter. In between, there are many levels of subtleness or grossness. That’s all existence is. So that point, where the paint is very thin, is what you are talking about.

***‘Your mind has lied to you a million times. But your body has never lied to you.’***

**Questioner:** Guruji, is there a point in trying to explore our past lives and is there a way for us to do it consciously?

**Sadhguru:** Is there a way to explore past lives? I know a lot of absolutely ridiculous things are going on about exploring past lives. These are just ridiculous psychological exercises. If you really want to see something of the past, you must be able to raise yourself to very heightened levels of awareness that will cut through the memory lines. But what’s the point? Right now, with what is happening in this life,

you are not able to handle the memory; what happened ten years ago, you suffer. When you are in this condition, if you remember ten lifetimes ago, it will drive you nuts.

Whatever you call 'past life' is just unconscious layers of the mind in terms of memory. If you bring yourself to heightened levels of awareness, these unconscious layers of the mind, which are ruling you from within, could be broken down and dissolved. Did they show you some clippings of Samyama meditation? Samyama is an eight-day advanced program at Isha that is a very intense process. If I tell you what happens in Samyama, either fear will come or disbelief will come. Let's say you are sitting and meditating. After some time, you are fully conscious, but suddenly you find your body is beginning to crawl around like a snake. You know it is happening and you want to stop it, but the body is just crawling like a snake. When you come out of meditation, you are perfectly normal, but when you sit for meditation, the body crawls. Then maybe it hops around like a bird or goes around like a dog, or a tiger, or something. It may take many forms.

Why this is happening is, there are so many dimensions in the unconscious layers of the mind which are not in your access. But they are influencing everything that you do. So if you go through a process where, with heightened levels of awareness, you bring the unconscious layers of the mind into conscious states - not in terms of memory, but in terms of energy and experience - you can work these things out and leave yourself completely free in a big way within yourself. In that context it is relevant. But remembering something memory-wise is not of any consequence. It will only complicate and mess up your life.

Suppose you realized that your neighbor's dog was your husband in your previous life, maybe you will go and kiss him or maybe you will throw stones at him; both ways it's dangerous, because he doesn't remember. By throwing stones at him, you will get into trouble with the neighbor. If you want to kiss him, you will get in trouble with the dog. So, it's not safe for you and it's not necessary for you. But on a

different plane, if you can bring it into your experience without going through the memory process, then it becomes a way of liberating yourself in a certain way.

What we do is known as Karma Samyama (there are various types of Samyamas). Layers and layers of the unconscious mind will just come up and work themselves out if you move to a certain level of intense awareness. No suggestion or guidance is given to you, but as you become more aware, suddenly you see the whole body goes through this process. What happens in the mind is never trustworthy. The mind can deceive you in a million different ways. But what happens in the body is real. Your mind has lied to you a million times. Has your body ever lied to you? That's why we always want these things to happen physiologically and energywise, not on the level of the mind, because mind is capable of unlimited hallucination. It can create anything and make you believe it's real.

These things are being done in such unscrupulous ways. There is this one incident that I came across. There is this couple in the United States who earned the maximum amount on the share market one particular year. The wife was mad about all this Hollywood stuff, and she bought a couple of homes in Beverly Hills, just to be around on the scene. And she was hooked to a psychic who charged her ninety dollars per hour for consultation on the telephone. In person, it was more.

This psychic was saying things which this lady firmly believed. The psychic told her that in her previous life, a very popular Hollywood actor - it's better that I don't name him - was her husband and another popular actor was her father. The psychic told her, 'You just have to be around them. They will notice you today or tomorrow.' The husband was going nuts because the woman was trying to somehow fall under the gaze of this actor, and was throwing parties and buying homes around the place. Then it came to my notice and somehow this lady landed up with me. So I said, 'Yes, I am also clear he was your husband.' She was overjoyed! At last, the mystic was also confirming what the psychic had been saying and what she desperately

wanted to believe. Instantly she was in absolute rapport with me and the conversation was going on and then I said, 'You know, in his previous life he was also so ugly and distorted in his body.' She actually started screaming! It never hit her that in his previous life he wouldn't look the same way as he does now. He wouldn't be a film star, maybe he was a farmer in India.

This is what past life stuff is doing to people, driving them crazy and getting them into all kinds of fanciful things. That's not the purpose of it.

***'There is a part of human nature which wants to expand, which wants to become boundless.'***

**Questioner:** Guruji, can you touch upon the topic of *ojas* that you once brought up?

**Sadhguru:** The three main processes which must happen to keep the physical body going are respiration, ingestion, and excretion. Even if you have no thought or emotion, you can still go on. But respiration, ingestion, and excretion must happen. These are three vital activities which need to happen to keep the physical body going. They mainly assist in converting one form of physical matter into another. For example, agriculture means you make mud into food. Digestion means you make food into flesh and shit.

These are all different process where you are converting one form of physical existence into another. You eat a carrot and you make it into a human being. Tremendous job, isn't it? Eating is not a simple thing. You eat a simple vegetable and you transform it into a human being. If it goes by the evolutionary scale, it must take ten million years. But you are doing it in one afternoon. It is not a small phenomenon. Without understanding the significance and the miracle of what you are doing, you are going on. If you understand and if you really experience this miracle, it is a tremendous job that you are doing. So converting one form of physical existence into another is a

natural process which is always happening in you.

This is nature. If you go by the laws of physical nature, then naturally, self-preservation is the main instinct and the main process. All these three things - respiration, ingestion, excretion - are connected with self-preservation. If self-preservation is happening well, then the next immediate thing that the physical existence demands is procreation. But that is also self-preservation - preservation of the race. It is a secondary level of self-preservation. The physical knows nothing else but self-preservation - and that's good. If the physical did not have any sense of self-preservation, you wouldn't exist.

Now you want to cater to a higher dimension within you. There is another part of nature in you which wants to expand, which wants to become something else, which is not willing to settle for the limited. It wants to become boundless. The boundary is always of the physical. Physical always means between two boundaries - either big boundaries or small boundaries. Nonphysical means no boundaries. So moving from the physical to the nonphysical also means moving from the bound to the boundless. To move from bound to boundless, you don't have a vehicle. Right now all that you have is physical. So you are trying to create a vehicle for yourself which is non-physical, but can still retain a certain form. Ojas is that dimension where you generate a nonphysical energy, but still it has its own individual form. So that is used as a vehicle.

If you create sufficient ojas around you, your passage in this existence will be well lubricated. You will see life happens effortlessly for you. Wherever you go, you move smoothly. So much turmoil may be happening around you. Everybody may be going through turmoil, but somehow your passage is always clear. You keep going. Once you are like this, you can take violent risks in your life, you know? Recklessly, you can live. Or at least other people think you are reckless, but you know where you are going so there is no hassle about it. You can live in such a way that other people think you are superhuman, simply because you have well-rounded ojas hanging around you. Your passage is well lubricated in the existence.

In the Far Eastern cultures, an enlightened being is referred to as *enso*. Enso means a circle. Why they are referring to him as a circle is, a circle is the shape of least resistance. Why are your car wheels or motorcycle wheels circular, not a rectangle or a triangle? Can you imagine how you would ride on square wheels? Why they are circular is because a circle is the shape of least resistance. Any moving part anywhere is a circle because it's of least resistance. If you create sufficient ojas around you, you become circular - not in body, okay? In your existence you become circular, so that your passage is with least resistance through the existence. Ojas creates this possibility.





# Isha Kriya

Isha Kriya™ is a simple yet potent practice created by Sadhguru, which is drawn from the wisdom of Indian spirituality. The word "kriya" literally means "internal action," while "Isha" refers to that which is the source of creation. The whole purpose of Isha Kriya is to help an individual get in touch with the source of one's existence, in order to create life the way you want. Provided as a free guided meditation online and available with written instructions as well, Isha Kriya offers the possibility to go beyond your limitations and live life to your fullest potential.

Daily practice of Isha Kriya brings health, dynamism, peace and wellbeing. It offers powerful tools to cope with the hectic pace of modern life. The instructions for Isha Kriya are given below. You can also watch the [Isha Kriya](#) instruction video.

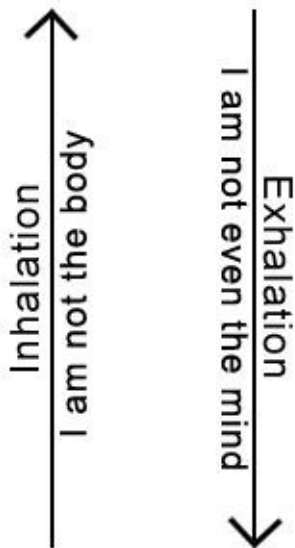


# PREPARATION

Sit facing east in a cross-legged posture, with your spine comfortably erect.

Keep your hands upon your thighs, with your palms facing up.

With your face slightly upturned, eyes closed, keep a mild focus between your eyebrows.



The breathing should be as shown  
in this diagram

# THE MEDITATION

## STAGE 1

Inhale and exhale gently, slowly.

With each inhalation, mentally say to yourself: "**I am not the body.**" The inhalation should last the whole duration of that thought.

With each exhalation, mentally say to yourself: "**I am not even the mind.**" The exhalation should last for the whole duration of that thought.

*Do this for 7 to 11 minutes.*

## STAGE 2

Utter a long "A" sound (as the "a" in father). The sound should come from just below the navel. You need not utter it very loud, but loud enough to feel the vibration.

Utter the long "A" sound 7 times, exhaling fully into each sound.

## STAGE 3

Sit for 5 to 6 minutes with a slightly upturned face, and keep a mild focus between your eyebrows.

*The total time of this practice is between 12 to 18 min. You can sit longer if you want.*

## PLEASE NOTE

While you sit for the Isha Kriya, do not pay attention to the activity of the mind or body. Whatever is happening in your body or your mind, just ignore it and simply sit there.

Do not take a break in between, as it will disturb the reorganization of energies that happens during the practice.

Each time you do the kriya, you must do it for a minimum of 12 minutes, and twice a day for 48 days (considered as a full *mandala* or cycle), or once a day for 90 days. This is your commitment. This is your *Gurudakshina* (A traditional offering to a Guru or Spiritual Master).

Anyone can practice this kriya and enjoy its benefits. Simply follow the instructions without making any changes. This is a simple but very potent kriya.

You can remind yourself that "I am not the body. I am not even the mind" anytime during the day.

**Questioner:** What can I possibly gain out of this?

**Sadhguru:** Where is the need to meditate, first of all? Starting the process of life was not your conscious choice, it "happened" to you. When you were born your body was so small, and now it has grown. So obviously, the body is something that you gathered. It is an accumulation. What you call as "my body" is an accumulation of food. Similarly, what you call as "my mind" is an accumulation of impressions.

Whatever you accumulate can be yours, but it can never be you. The very fact you accumulated it means that you gathered it from somewhere else. Today you could gather a 70 kg body, but you can decide to make it a 60 kg body. You don't go looking for those 10 kgs, because they were an accumulation. Once you drop it, it is gone. Similarly, with your mind, it is an accumulation of impressions.

The moment you are identified in your experience, the moment you are identified with something that you are not, your perception goes completely haywire. You cannot perceive life the way it is; your perception is hugely distorted. So the moment you start experiencing this body, which you gathered from outside, as "myself," the moment you start experiencing the impressions that you have in your mind as "myself," you cannot perceive life the way it is. You will only perceive life the way it is necessary for your survival, and not the way it really is.

Yet once you have come as a human being, survival is very important, but it is not enough. If you had come here like any other

creature on this planet, stomach full - life would be settled. But once you come here as a human being, life does not end with survival. Actually, for a human being, life begins only after survival is fulfilled.

So meditation gives you an experience, an inner state where what is you and what is yours is separated. There is a little distance, there is a little space between what is you and what you have accumulated. For now we can understand this as meditation.

What is the use of doing this? It brings an absolute clarity of perception. You see life just the way it is. No distortions about it; simply seeing life just the way it is. Right now if we see this very hall as a world, your ability to go through this world is only to the extent that you clearly see it. If I have no clarity of vision but if I have confidence and if I try to go through this, I'm going to be a bumbling idiot. Whenever there is no perception, people try to overcome that by building confidence in them. Without the clarity of perception people are trying to make it up with other kinds of substitutes; there is no substitute for clarity.

Once you understand this you naturally become meditative; you want to clear up everything and just look at life the way it is, because you want to walk through life with least amount of friction, without stumbling on this or that.

**Questioner:** Why should my head be slightly upturned?

**Sadhguru:** Sitting with your head slightly upturned is not because you want to see something floating in the sky or imagine something. You keep your head upturned because when your system "looks" upward it becomes receptive. It is like opening a window. This is about becoming receptive to Grace. When you become willing and receptive, your body naturally arches up.

**Questioner:** What does this meditation do?

**Sadhguru:** This Kriya will create a certain space between you and your body, between you and your mind. If at all there is any struggle in your life, it is because you identify yourself with these limited aspects of yourself.

So the essence of meditation is that it creates a space, a distance between you and what you refer to as your "mind." All the suffering you go through is manufactured in your mind, isn't it so? If you distance yourself from the mind, can there be suffering in you? This is the end of suffering.

Now while you are meditating, there is a distance between you and your mind, and you do feel peaceful. The problem is that the moment you open your eyes, you are again stuck with your mind.

If you meditate every day, a day will come when you open your eyes, and you can still experience that the mind is there and you are here. This is the end of suffering. When you are no longer identified with your body and mind, you will be in touch with the source of Creation within you. Once this happens, Grace happens.

Whether you are here, or beyond, this is the end of suffering. That means your whole karmic bag - your past, or your unconscious mind - has been kept aside. It cannot have any influence over you. Once the past has no influence over you, then life becomes a huge potential. Every breath becomes such a tremendous possibility in your life, because the past is not playing any role in your existence here now. If you sit here, you are absolute life. Life becomes effortless.

**Questioner:** What is the importance of the breath? Is there more to breathing well than being healthy?

**Sadhguru:** Breath is the thread which ties you to the body. If I take away your breath, your body will fall apart. It is the breath that has tied you to the body. What you call as your body and what you call as "me" have been tied together with breath. And this breath

decides many aspects of who you are right now. For different levels of thought and emotion that you go through, your breath takes on different types of patterns. If you are angry you will be breathing one way. You are peaceful, you breathe another way. You are happy, you breathe another way. You are sad, you will breathe another way. Have you noticed this?

Based on this conversely is the science of pranayama and kriya: by consciously breathing in a particular way, the very way you think, feel, understand and experience life can be changed.

This breath can be used in so many ways as a tool to do other things with the body and the mind. You will see with the Isha Kriya, we are using a simple process of breath, but the kriya itself is not in the breath. Breath is just a tool. Breath is an induction, but what happens is not about the breath.

Whichever way you breathe, that is the way you think. Whichever way you think, that is the way you breathe. Your whole life, your whole unconscious mind is written into your breath. If you just read your breath, your past, present and future is written there, in the way you breathe.

Once you realize this, life becomes very different. It needs to be known experientially; it is not something you can propound like this. If you know the bliss of simply sitting here, the blissfulness of just being able to simply sit here, not think anything, not do anything, simply sit here, just being life, then life would be very different.

In a way, what this means is today there is scientific proof that without taking a drop of alcohol, without taking any substance you can simply sit here and get drugged or stoned or drunk by yourself. If you are aware in a certain way, you can activate the system in such a way that if you sit here it is an enormous pleasure. Once simply sitting and breathing is such a great pleasure, you will become very genial, flexible, wonderful because all the time you are in a great state within yourself. No hangover. Mind becomes sharper than ever before.

**Questioner:** What effect does uttering the sound "Aaa" have on me?

**Sadhguru:** When you utter the sound "Aaa," the maintenance center in your body gets activated. This is *Manipuraka chakra*, or the navel center. Manipuraka is just three-fourths of an inch below your navel. When you were in your mother's womb, the "maintenance" pipe was connected there. Now the tube is gone, but the maintenance center is still in your navel.

Now as there is a physical body, there is a whole energy body that we generally refer to as either prana or *shakti*. This energy, or prana, flows through the body in certain established patterns; it is not moving randomly. There are 72,000 different ways in which it moves. In other words, there are 72,000 pathways in the system through which it is flowing. So *nadis* are pathways or channels in the system. They do not have a physical manifestation; if you cut the body and look inside, you will not find these nadis. But as you become more and more aware, you will notice the energy is not moving at random, it is moving in established pathways.

When you utter the sound "Aaa," you will see the reverberation will start about three-fourths of an inch below the navel and spread right across the body. Sound "Aaa" is the only reverberation which spreads right across the body because this is the only place where the 72,000 nadis meet and redistribute themselves. They all meet at Manipuraka and redistribute themselves. This is the only point in the body like that. If you utter the sound "Aaa," the reverberations of this sound are carried right across the system.

This reverberation can assist greatly in energizing your maintenance center. Activating this center will bring health, dynamism, prosperity and wellbeing.

[ishakriya.com](http://ishakriya.com)



# About Isha

## Sadhguru



Yogi, mystic, visionary and poet, Sadhguru is a spiritual master with a difference. An arresting blend of profundity and pragmatism, his life and work serve as a reminder that yoga is not an esoteric discipline from an outdated past, but a contemporary science, vitally relevant to our times. Probing, passionate and provocative, insightful, logical and unfailingly witty, Sadhguru's talks have earned him the reputation of a speaker and opinion-maker of international renown.



With speaking engagements that take him around the world, he is widely sought after by prestigious global forums to address issues as diverse as human rights, business values, and social, environmental and existential issues. He has been a delegate to the United Nations Millennium World Peace Summit, a member of the World Council of Religious and Spiritual Leaders and Alliance for New Humanity, a special invitee to the Australian Leadership Retreat, Tallberg Forum, Indian Economic Summit 2005-2008, as well as a regular at the World Economic Forum in Davos. He was awarded the Indira Gandhi Paryavaran Puraskar (IGPP) for the year 2008 for Isha Foundation's Project GreenHands' efforts.

With a celebratory engagement with life on all levels, Sadhguru's areas of active involvement encompass fields as diverse as architecture and visual design, poetry and painting, ecology and horticulture, sports and music. He is the author and designer of several unique buildings and consecrated spaces at the Isha Yoga Center, which have wide attention for their combination of intense sacred power with strikingly innovative eco-friendly aesthetics.

Listeners have been ubiquitously impressed by his astute and incisive grasp of current issues and world affairs, as well as his unerringly scientific approach to the question of human wellbeing. Sadhguru is also the founder of Isha Foundation, a non-profit

organization dedicated to the wellbeing of the individual and the world for the past three decades. Isha Foundation does not promote any particular ideology, religion, or race, but transmits inner sciences of universal appeal.

[Sadhguru's Official Website](#)

[Sadhguru's Youtube Channel](#)

# Isha Foundation



Isha Foundation is a non-profit human-service organization, supported by over two million volunteers in over 150 centers worldwide. Recognizing the possibility of each person to empower another, Isha Foundation has created a massive movement that is dedicated to address all aspects of human wellbeing, without ascribing to any particular ideology, religion or race.

Isha Foundation is involved in several path-breaking outreach initiatives: Action for Rural Rejuvenation (ARR) enhances the quality of rural life through healthcare and disease prevention, community revitalization, women empowerment, the creation of sustainable livelihoods, and yoga programs. Isha Vidhya empowers rural children with quality education. Project GreenHands (PGH) initiates mass tree planting and creates a culture of care for the environment to keep this planet liveable for future generations.

Isha's unique approach in cultivating human potential has gained worldwide recognition and reflects in Isha Foundation's special

consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations.

The Foundation is headquartered at the Isha Yoga Center, set in the lush rainforest at the base of the Velliangiri Mountains in southern India, and at the Isha Institute of Inner-sciences on the spectacular Cumberland Plateau in central Tennessee, USA.

[The Isha Foundation Homepage](#)

[The Isha Blog](#)

# Isha Yoga



Isha Yoga is a customized system of yoga which distills powerful, ancient yogic methods for a modern person, creating peak physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing. This basis of total wellbeing accelerates inner growth, allowing each individual to tap the wealth of vibrant life within oneself. Sadhguru's introductory program, Inner Engineering, introduces Shambhavi Mahamudra a simple but powerful kriya (inner energy process) for deep inner transformation.

The uniqueness of Isha Yoga is that it is offered as a science. It draws on the ancient yogic principle that the body is the temple of the spirit and that good health is fundamental to personal and spiritual

development. Scientifically structured, it promotes beneficial changes in one's inner chemistry to accelerate the release of physical, mental and emotional blocks and produce a life-transforming impact of profound experience, clarity and boundless energy.

Isha Yoga involves a combination of carefully selected purificatory and preparatory practices, including a series of dynamic breathing techniques and meditation in simple sitting postures. The practices that are taught do not demand physical agility or previous experience of yoga. They integrate seamlessly into one's daily life, allowing one to function at the optimum level, making peace and joy one's natural way of being. Thus, individuals, regardless of their personal situations or backgrounds, have the possibility to integrate a powerful spiritual process into their lives.

Isha Yoga involves a combination of carefully selected purificatory and preparatory practices, including a series of dynamic breathing techniques and meditation in simple sitting postures. The practices that are taught do not demand any physical agility or previous experience of yoga. They integrate seamlessly into one's daily life, allowing one to function at optimum level, making peace and joy one's natural way of being.

The programs are designed for a balanced development of an individual, to bring a spiritual dimension into one's perception without disturbing the process of one's life. Thus, ordinary people have the possibility to have powerful spiritual experiences while balancing normal family and social situations.

[www.ishayoga.org](http://www.ishayoga.org)



# Inner Engineering Online



Inner Engineering Online is a practical approach to inner transformation in a fast-paced world. The online course designed by Sadhguru presents simple, yet powerful tools for an individual to experience life on a deeper level with more awareness, energy and productivity. It establishes a positive and open approach to life, by improving mental clarity and the ability to handle stressful situations, while generating inner peace and fulfillment. Interpersonal relationships are deepened, cultivating a greater sense of connectivity



at home, work and in the community.

Inner Engineering Online is an ideal opportunity for those with time and travel constraints to experience the same profound effects of Isha programs, which have benefited millions of people. Upon completion of the online course, one is eligible to attend a Shambhavi Mahamudra Retreat, which is offered regularly at Isha centers in the United States and other parts of the world.

***To LEARN more and SIGN-UP, visit***  
[www.InnerEngineering.com](http://www.InnerEngineering.com) or call 1-877-831-2705



# Isha Yoga Center



Isha Yoga Center, founded under the aegis of Isha Foundation, is located on 150 acres of lush land at the foothills of the Velliangiri Mountains that are part of the Nilgiris Biosphere, a reserve forest with abundant wildlife.

Created as a powerful *sthana* (a center for inner growth), this popular destination attracts people from all parts of the world. It is unique in its offering of all aspects of yoga - gnana (knowledge), karma (action), kriya (energy), and bhakti (devotion) and revives the Guru-shishya parampara (the traditional method of knowledge transfer from Master to disciple).

Isha Yoga Center provides a supportive environment for people to shift to healthier lifestyles, improve interpersonal relationships, seek a higher level of self-fulfillment, and realize their full potential.

The Center is located 30 km west of Coimbatore, a major industrial city in South India which is well connected by air, rail, and

road. All major national airlines operate regular flights into Coimbatore from Chennai, Delhi, Mumbai, and Bangalore. Train services are available from all major cities in India. Regular bus and taxi services are also available from Coimbatore to the Center.

Visitors are advised to contact the Center for availability and reservation of accommodation well in advance, as it is generally heavily booked.



# Dhyanalinga Yogic Temple



The Dhyanalinga is a powerful and unique energy form created by Sadhguru from the essence of yogic sciences. Situated at the Isha Yoga Center, the Dhyanalinga is the first of its kind to be completed in

over 2000 years. The Dhyanalinga Yogic Temple is a meditative space that does not ascribe to any particular faith or belief system nor does it require any ritual, prayer, or worship.

The Dhyanalinga was consecrated by Sadhguru after three years of an intense process of prana pratishta. Housed within an architecturally striking pillarless dome structure, the Dhyanalinga's energies allow even those unaware of meditation to experience a deep state of meditateness, revealing the essential nature of life.

A special feature of the temple complex is the Theerthakund, a consecrated water body, sunk 30 feet into the earth and energized by a specially consecrated rasalinga. A dip in this vibrant pool significantly enhances one's spiritual receptivity and is a good preparation to receive the Grace of the Dhyanalinga. The waters of the Theerthakund also rejuvenate the body, and bring health and wellbeing.

The Dhyanalinga Yogic Temple draws many thousands of people every week, who converge to experience a deep sense of inner peace.

[www.dhyanalinga.org](http://www.dhyanalinga.org)



# **Institute of Inner-sciences (iii)**



Nestled on a breathtaking mountain top in the beautiful Cumberland Plateau of Tennessee, Isha Institute of Inner-sciences (iii) is established as an infrastructure for raising human consciousness – fostering global harmony through individual transformation.

The Institute offers a variety of programs that provide methods for anyone to attain physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing. It is a unique space created for human beings to deepen their experience of life, and to reach their ultimate potential.

Founded and guided by Sadhguru – a yogi, profound mystic, and humanitarian – Isha Institute of Inner-sciences will remain an essential resource for seekers wishing to explore the ancient science of yoga in

all its depth and dimensions for many generations to come. Isha Institute of Inner-sciences is open 365 days a year and welcomes visitors from all walks of life.

[www.ishausa.org](http://www.ishausa.org)

# Worldwide Centers

## INDIA

Isha Yoga Center, Velliangiri Foothills, Semmedu (P.O.),  
Velliangiri Foothills Coimbatore 641114 India. Telephone: +91-422-  
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## USA

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# Glossary

Krishna: Historically over five thousand years ago, Krishna is the central character of the epic Mahabharata. His discourse to his chief disciple Arjuna in the form of the Bhagavad Gita is the most sacred of Hindu scriptures.

Mumbai: A major city in India.

Maya: Delusion, the veil of illusion which conceals one's true nature, or conceals reality.

Rama: The hero of the epic Ramayana.

Sadhana: Spiritual practices which are used as a means to realization.

Varanasi: Over 3000 years old, Varanasi is one of the oldest cities in the world. In India, Hindus consider it to be the holiest of holy cities.

Karma: Refers to the volition with which one performs action. Karma is the mechanism that binds one to the body and creates tendencies that rule one's life.

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